

Comments and thoughts on districts 1, 2 ,3 ,15 ,and 16

Mark Graham

to redistrictingcommittee

Hello Redistricting Committee! After having seen your most recent draft for our state's congressional districts, I have a few thoughts and an example plan.

Firstly, I am very pleased to see Mary Miller and Mike Bost put into the same district. Reducing their influence, as they are the most conservative representatives of our state, is a shrewd move. This should be maintained. However, I do have some potential changes for some other districts.

I can understand the reasoning behind draggin the 2nd district down to Danville, but I believe this is ill-advised, mainly when it comes to district 15. Ignoring the fact that the 2nd, as drawn in your recent draft, is not majority black, having the 2nd district go that far down leaves very little 'wiggle room', you could say, for the 15th district to change its borders up (something that will become evident later on in this email, I will explain it further then). I believe that instead the 2nd should include more of rural Will County, such as Manhattan and it's half of Chahannon. The 1st, which in your draft holds these areas, should curve up to include Lemont, as it does in my attached plan.

I suggest these changes for a couple reasons. I already mentioned the 15th's 'wiggle room' above, but I also think that there has to be at least some respect for cultural ties with communities. Danville is obviously not part of the Chicago metro area, while Manhattan and New Lenox are, though realistically on the fringes of it. Maximizing the Democratic share of seats is the first goal aside from VRA compliance, but I think it is preferable to choose the option that both does that and also respect media markets and cultural ties a bit more. Making these changes will still allow for other districts to be Democratic, while also keeping both the 1st and 2nd above 50% Black CVAP and potentially satisfying Representatives Rush and Kelly more. I hear that Rush does not want his district extended down too far, so curving it to include some Cook County suburbs like Lemont seems like it would make him feel better than stretching his district down to Bourbonnais. Kelly I am unsure about, but I think she would also appreciate a plan like mine more than the current draft.

Thirdly, I would recommend drawing the 3rd district to be even more Hispanic and include La Grange in it. As my map demonstrates (at least on DRA), you can draw two districts, 3 and 4, that are both over 50% Hispanic CVAP. Having a true Hispanic district is better than just the

plurality one in the current map in my opinion, but perhaps Rep. Garcia has some issues with a plan like that. Regardless, I would also recommend against putting Reps. Newman and Casten in the same district to avoid a nasty primary fight. Of course, this could be the intention to allow for a Hispanic congressperson in the 3rd, but I see any primary fight as something that could weaken the party, both monetarily and electorally. The 6th may not be immediately in danger on paper, but if there is a strong Republican wave every dollar could count.

And lastly, I want to speak about the 15th and 16th districts. I appreciate the current draft following my proposal to create a district solely for Rep. Davis, but recently I have had another idea that may or may not be better. In the attachments here, I have a plan that places Grundy County in the 15th district, therefore making Reps. Kizinger and Davis live in the same district. My thought process was this: If at all possible, it is preferable to keep one or both of these representatives in the House. Kizinger, while holding conservative views, is a prominent critic of Trump, making him a useful tool. Davis is not quite as oppositional to Trump but has a more moderate voting record overall, making it preferable for him to stay. As currently drafted, Kizinger will certainly lose a primary to Rep. LaHood, and Davis, while probably favored to still remain in office, could be primaried out of his district, leaving us without either congressman.

Therefore, my plan places the two in the same district. The idea here is that the primary fight between the two could dissuade a more Trumpian candidate from trying to take the seat, or at the very least splitting the vote enough that at least either Kizinger or Davis wins the seat. This would mean that at least one of the two would remain in congress.

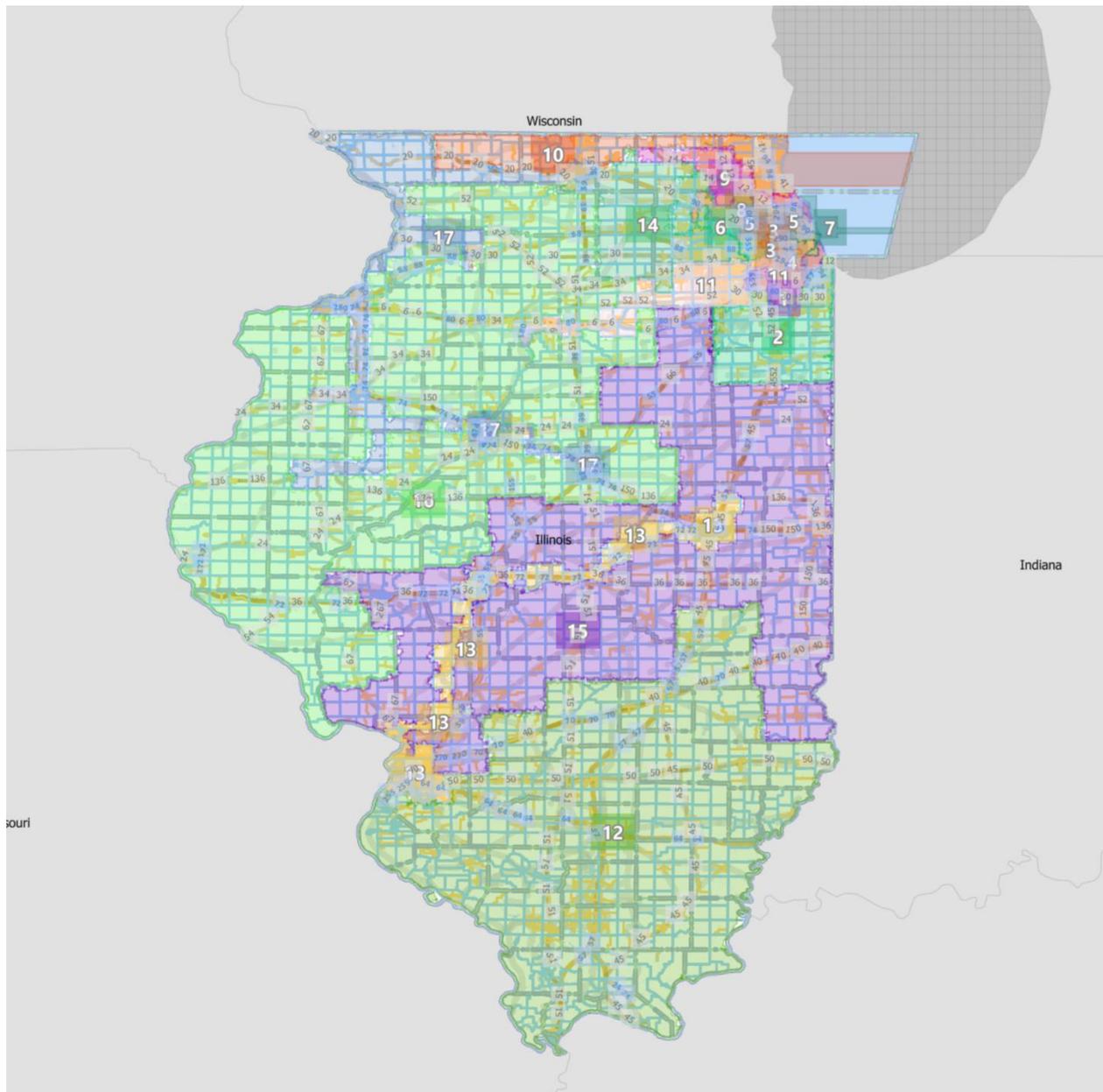
Of course, this plan would require the 15th to have Vermillion County in order to get Grundy County, explaining why I do not think the 2nd should have it. I also acknowledge that this plan could potentially backfire, with a Trumpian candidate beating both in the primary. I am honestly not sure if this would be better than the draft, but I would encourage the committee to at least consider it and weigh it against the current draft.

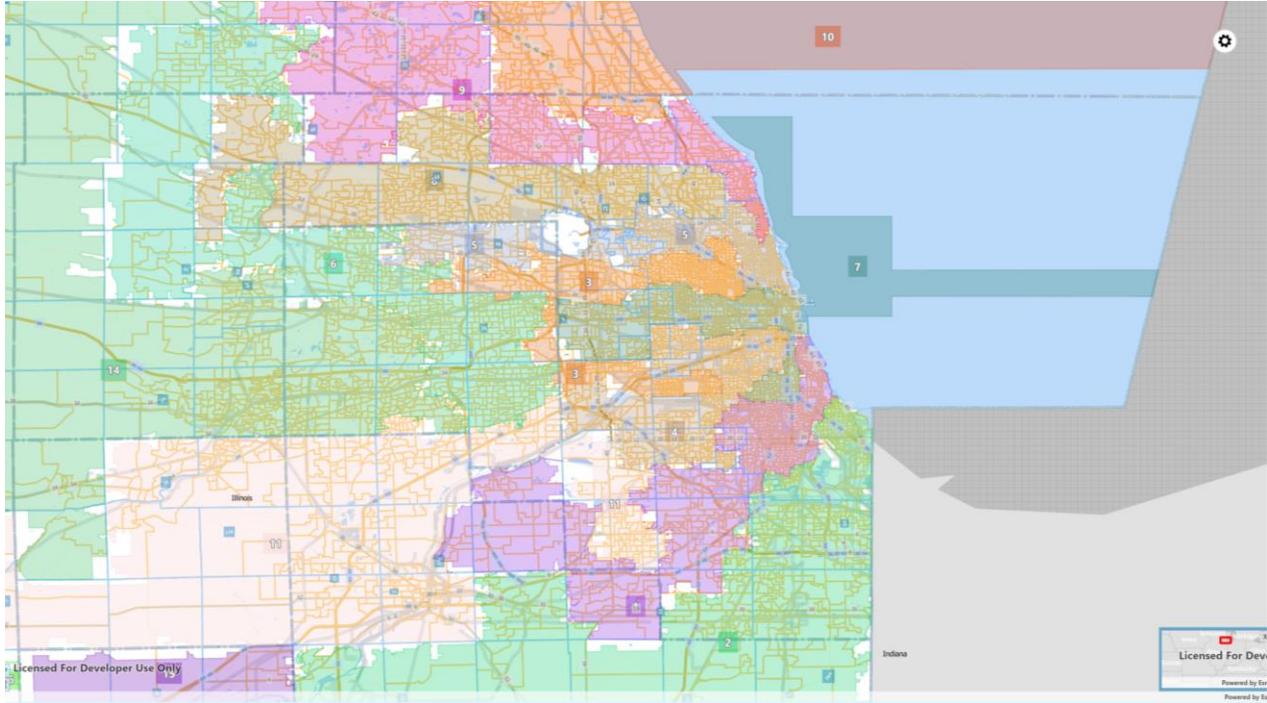
Attached here is a plan where these recommendations are implemented, in both GeoJSON and ShapeFile formats. I would specifically focus on the five district I listed in my title: while I would like for places like my hometown of Arlington Heights to be kept whole, I can live with the current draft there. I sincerely hope that you all give these suggestions a consideration and potentially implement them. Thank you for reading this long email!

Mark Graham

to redistrictingcommittee

Actually, perhaps Mount Greenwood could go to the 4th district, since I believe Rush doesn't want it?





Wisconsin

